

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 00744 210816Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /094 W
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R 201340Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9173
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 696
CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 744

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MR, SS, OAU, PBOR
SUBJ: SAGARA WATCH: MAURITANIAN OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON OAU SUMMIT ON
WESTERN SAHARA

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 405 (NOTAL)

1. AMBASSADOR MUHAMMED OULD SIDI ALI, FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY
GENERAL, TOLD ME THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN AGREED TO DISCUSS
WESTERN SAHARA ISSUE AT JULY 1978 KHARTOUM OAU SUMMIT AND THAT HE
PERSONALLY BELIEVED OAU WOULD TAKE UP ISSUE PRIOR TO THAT TIME.
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PAGE 02 NOUAKC 00744 210816Z

AMBASSADOR ALI EMPHASIZED THAT THE MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT (FIRM)
CONSIDERED A BASIC PREREQUISITE FOR A SPECIAL SUMMIT WAS THAT
QUOTE AN IMPORTANT NUMBER UNQUOTE OF CHIEFS-OF-STATE AGREE TO
ATTEND AND WENT ON TO OBSERVE THAT A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF
CHIEFS-OF-STATE HAD AGREED TO THIS. HE STATED THAT GIRM HAD
NO OBJECTION TO POLISARIO FIGURKU ATTENDING SPECIAL SUMMIT
PROVIDED THESE INDIVIDUALS WERE RECOGNIZED AS REPRESENTING THE

REFUGEE POPULATION IN TINDOUF AND NOT THE POLISARIO OR SAHARAN DEMOCRATIC ARAB REPUBLIC.

2. AMBASSADOR ALI RECENTLY RETURNED FROM TRIPOLI WHERE HE ATTENDED BOTH THE OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETINGS (REFTEL). HE STATED THAT WHILE ONLY MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA HAD PUBLICLY OPPOSED THE CANARY ISLANDS RESOLUTION, MANY DELEGATES WHO DID NOT SPEAK OUT DO IN FACT OPPOSE THE RESOLUTION. HE STATED THAT MUCH TOO MUCH IS BEING MADE OF WHAT ACTUALLY TRANSPIRED.

3. AMBASSADOR ALI, WHO IS A CLOSE AND TRUSTED ASSOCIATE OF FOREIGN MINISTER MOUKNASS, HAS RECENTLY BEEN ELEVATED TO POSITION OF SECRETARY GENERAL IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. ALTHOUGH HE EMPHASIZED THAT HIS OPINION THAT THE OAU WOULD DISCUSS THE WESTERN SAHARA QUESTION BEFORE KHARTOUM WAS PERSONAL AND NOT OFFICIAL, HIS FREQUENT CONTACT WITH A WIDE RANGE OF AFRICAN AND ARAB LEADERS PROVIDES A GOOD BASE TO BUILD SUCH SPECULATION. IN ADDITION, GIRM OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT IF OAU DOES NOT CONSIDER SAHARA ISSUE BEFORE NEXT UNGA, UNGA MAY BE FORCED TO TAKE UP ISSUE. THEY PREFER KEEPING QUESTION OUT OF UN. KRYZA

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